

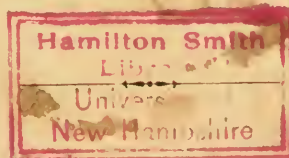
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Superintending School Committee,

OF THE TOWN OF LEE,

FOR THE YEAR 1872.



DOVER, N. H.

H. H. GOODWIN, BOOK & JOB PRINTER.

1873.

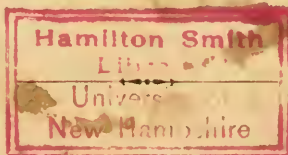
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REPORT.

In compliance with the requirements of the General Statutes, and of common custom, the School Committee of Lee respectfully submit the following report of the condition and progress of the schools during the past year :—

DISTRICT NO. 1.—Turnpike.

H. B. SNELL, Prudential Committee.

Summer Term.—ROSE M. CRAMM, Teacher. Attendance 30 ; average 23. Wages per month including board \$28.00.

Winter Term.—WALTER H. FURBER, Teacher. Attendance 31 ; average 18. Wages per month including board \$32.00.

Miss Cramm seemed to possess the very desirable faculty of governing well, and that, too, without severity. As this teacher has taught several terms in town before, the character of her work is well known, and, therefore, needs but little comment. Credit is due for the interest excited in the minds of the scholars.

The teacher, trying to perform every duty faithfully, as she evidently did, labored under the too prevalent difficulty—want of training ; hence the character, amount, and real worth of the work done was not all it ought to have been, in some studies.

Mr. H. W. Furber of East Northwood, had charge of the school during the Winter term. The teacher passed a creditable examination, and this fact, coupled with the good order and general pleasantness of the school on my first visit, induced me to anticipate a pleasant and profitable term. There is little doubt but that these expectations were realized, so far as those who attended regularly were concerned. Owing to the sudden and unexpected close of the school, it was visited but once during the term.

An examination of the Register discloses a noticeable fact: sixteen scholars left before the term closed, and several others were absent one, two, or perhaps three days in nearly every week. Such extreme irregularity must be the fault of both parents and pupils, and, possibly, of the teacher as well. If this district was united with "Mast Road" district, the result of the combination would be productive of great good to both.

DISTRICT NO. 2.—*Mast Road.*

ALPHONZO JONES, Prudential Committee.

Winter Term.—ELLA M. MCINTIRE, Teacher. Attendance 21; average 14. Wages per month including board \$25.00.

The money in this district was sufficient for but one term of school; that, beginning late in the Fall, continued 14 1-2 weeks under the charge of Miss McIntire of Lancaster. The attendance was small and very irregular, the average being only two-thirds of the whole number, while the instances of tardiness mounted up to 77, and of dismissal to 65. These figures show evident neglect and want of interest on the part of parents and pupils, and, I fear, lack of energy on the part of the teacher.

The classes in Mental and Written Arithmetic passed satisfactory examinations, answering most of the questions with that promptness which betokens a good understanding of the subject in hand. Though, strictly speaking, not within the limits of an ordinary School Report, I wish to suggest that the supply of black-board in this school-room is but little, if any, better than none. A carpenter cannot work without proper tools, neither can a *good* teacher. The popular but mistaken idea is, that a supply of black-board is necessary only when a class in mathematics is being *heard*. The truth is, that no really good teacher can or will *teach* a class in reading, writing, grammar, geography, or any study of our schools, without illustrations, both numerous and various; and the illustrations can not and will not come to the mind of the pupil with their full effect, unless seen as well as heard. Experience teaches that the more of the senses we appeal to, in presenting a subject, the easier the pupil understands, the quicker he learns, and the longer he remembers the subject so presented.

Teaching and hearing a class are two entirely different things. One is work, and work which requires special training to perform; the other is—nothing.

DISTRICT NO. 3.—*Wednesday Hill.*

ABRAM CLARK, Prudential Committee.

Full Term.—MARY B. YORK, Teacher. Attendance 6; average 3. Wages per month including board, \$28.00.

This school with an average attendance of 3 and a fraction, is a good illustration of the workings of the "district system."

Miss York's examination evinced the fact that she is one of the few teachers, who know what they know; who, also, when called upon, can express a thought clearly and intelligently. The success of the teacher's efforts can not be attested better than by saying that, though this district has "divers opinions" on the subject of "our Common Schools," not a word of fault was found with the teacher or her efforts. I qualify this last statement by saying,—so far as I know.

One can say but little of the actual workings of a school where one finds, on a visit, the teacher presiding over a school of *two*; nor does one find much rivalry or animation in a class of *one*. The idea of paying out nearly \$100. every year, for the purpose of having a governess for three children, when by abolishing the district lines and the office of Prudential Committee, the same money could be made to do five times the work for each of twenty times the number of children, is simply ridiculous.

DISTRICT NO. 4.—*Hill.*

LEVI PENDERGAST, Prudential Committee.

Summer Term —LIZZIE H. SHERBURNE, Teacher. Attendance 22; average 20. Wages per month including board \$28.00.

Winter Term.—LIZZIE H. SHERBURNE, Teacher. Attendance 37; average 28. Wages per month including board \$32.00.

Miss Sherburne has had considerable experience as a teacher, and has undoubtedly, often given most general satisfaction; but in this school, though some were much pleased, her success was not what some teachers would have met with. All concerned, teacher, pupils and parents, deserve credit for the good attendance; and, too, the teacher and pupils deserve and receive credit for the good order maintained during the term.

In this school, as in so many others around us, the lack of success in the work is, alike, the fault of the people and of the committees who hire and examine. As in every thing else, supply will follow demand; then let the people of Lee ask for thoroughly trained teachers, offering

wages according to ability, and they will find plenty. Under the too general custom among Prudential Committees, whose business it is simply to engage teachers, of adding to the *length* of the school by reducing wages, no premium is offered for best teachers. *Quantity*, not *quality*, is sought after.

Again, our methods of examination indicate neither the inferior nor the superior; they express results in too general a form; they are merely labels subscribed "this is a teacher." Let us ask, yes, demand better, more thoroughly trained teachers; more thorough examinations, the results of which shall be expressed in graded certificates, and better and more inspection of our schools. These remarks, though general in character, report the condition, work and wants of this school more aptly than any others.

The work of the Winter term varied but little in character from that of the Summer. It is impossible to make a definite report of an *in-definite* thing.

DISTRICT NO. 5.—*Hook.*

ISRAEL G. YORK, Prudential Committee.

Summer Term.—ARIANNA G. BARTLETT, Teacher. Attendance 26; average 23. Wages per month including board \$24.00.

Winter Term.—ARIANNA G. BARTLETT, Teacher. Attendance 28; average 23. Wages per month including board \$24.00.

The full and regular attendance deserves mention and praise. In the report of the Summer or Fall term, we find 12 pupils mentioned as neither tardy, dismissed, or absent one-half day. Winter term has a record of 7, who belong to this class.

This school, the most advanced in town, is making rapid strides toward the proper standard. In its list of studies pursued, I was sorry to note the absence of Physiology and Book-keeping. The school had been under the charge of Miss Bartlett during the two preceding terms, and being thus acquainted with the wants of the pupils, she lost no time in putting them to work.

The studies, pupils and teacher being the same in winter as in summer, the second term needs no separate report. Who will start a subscription list to buy a "Webster's Unabridged" for the use of this school?

DISTRICT NO. 6.—*Wadley's.*

JOSIAH DURGIN, Prudential Committee.

Summer Term.—ARIANNA G. BARTLETT, Teacher. Attendance 26 ; average 20. Wages per month including board \$28.00.

Winter Term.—MARY S. BENNETT, Teacher. Attendance 35 ; average 28. Wages per month including board \$30.00.

On my first visit to this school, a few days after the commencement of the Summer term, it seemed to be in a bad condition as regarded the order, and the respect due the teacher and visitors ; whether this was the result of indifferent schools in the past or of mere thoughtlessness, it was difficult to decide, but subsequent events proved the pupils and district to be not lacking in the desire for a good school. Visiting the school at the close, the order was found to be excellent, thereby reflecting credit upon the firm yet kindly rule of the teacher, and the cheerful obedience of the pupils.

The promptness of the recitations and the large number of visitors present at the closing examination, show this to have been among the most successful terms during the year in the town. While giving the teacher a full and hearty measure of praise for her earnest and successful efforts, I wish to suggest that a less close adherence to the questions and set forms in the text-books, and a more extended application of new methods of instruction, would add materially to her success, be pleasing to the committee, and of inestimable benefit to the children under her charge.

The Winter term, in charge of Miss Mary S. Bennett of New Market, was as successful as the summer term. The recitations, at the close of the term, in geography and arithmetic, deserve special mention. The work in English grammar, as in all the other schools in town, did not seem to be quite up to the standard. Taking the examination as a whole, it was as satisfactory as any during the year.

I wish to suggest that the black-board in this school-room needs "remodeling" very much.

DISTRICT NO. 7.—*Lang's.*

AMOS E. PIPER, Prudential Committee.

Summer Term.—LYDIA A. WATSON, Teacher. Attendance ; average 16. Wages per month including board \$29.60.

Winter Term.—LYDIA A. WATSON, Teacher. Attendance ; average 16. Wages per month including board \$33.60.

Miss Watson had had charge of this school several terms before, and consequently, was well qualified to judge of the needs of the school. Visiting the school, one was struck immediately by the extremely good order. Never before, in any school, have I seen the *science of order*, so fully illustrated. As to the character of the work done in the summer term, the committee can say but little, as no notice of the time of closing was sent in.

In the examination at the close of the winter term some of the pupils did well, showing themselves to be thorough and patient students. The work and wants of the school can be summed up in a very few words—more *teaching*, less *hearing*.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Whatever has been said, or whatever may be said in these remarks, is said with only one object in view: the good of our schools. Perhaps I have criticised more sharply than it is customary; if so, remember that this is a report of schools, not of teachers. Without doubt, all the teachers in town performed every duty in the manner which they judged best. It is not intended to criticise the teachers, but their work; not the manner, but the method.

New Hampshire is no longer behind her sister States in the matter of having a Normal School. To be a success, it must be well supported and well attended. The Legislature will, or ought to attend to the first, the teachers of the state must attend to the second. I earnestly recommend, that every teacher, and every person intending to teach, should attend our own or some other Normal School, at least two years.

Few teachers fully appreciate how sacred are the obligations devolving upon them in their high vocation. Consequently, few thoroughly prepare themselves for their work. While they remember that the physician owes a thorough professional preparation to his patient, the lawyer to his client, and so generally of other corresponding relations, they seem to forget the duties they owe to their pupils. Then, let us have done with this teaching of teachers who have never been taught. Why will not the seven Prudential Committees get together and decide to send to a training school for seven trained teachers; have the schools all commence at one time; each committee noting carefully the work

done in his own and adjoining districts, and each comparing notes with the others, and with the past, strike a balance and report to the Superintendent, said report to be given to the people in the "Annual Report." In this way committee and sub-committees would work together, not against each other, as at present. I feel confident that the best of our local teachers would agree to the "experiment," if such you choose to call it.

In the matter of studies, I wish to suggest that it would be well to encourage the young people to pursue all the branches commonly spoken of as "Higher English" in our common schools. Why should the children be obliged to go away to an Academy at a cost of \$100 per term, to study those branches which can be taught just as well in the district school. The teacher who can not *teach* Book-keeping, Physiology, Natural Philosophy and Algebra, and, I may add, English Grammar, is not fitted to teach in any grade, and, hence, should not be employed. The study of book-keeping is, by most, allowed to be particularly useful; but physiology, I am sorry to admit, is considered by many to be of no particular consequence. Horace Mann, in his exhaustive report on the Study of Physiology to the Massachusetts Board of Education, writes as follows: "I have the concurrent authority of many of our most eminent physicians for saying that *one-half* of all human disability, of the suffering and early death inflicted upon mankind, proceeds from ignorance,—from sheer ignorance of facts and principles, which every parent by virtue of his parental relation, is as much bound to know as a judge is bound to know the civil or criminal law which he undertakes to administer; or, as a juror, in a case of life or death, is bound to understand the evidence on which his verdict is to be rendered. When we reflect that every child in the community, before he arrives at the age of twenty years, might and should become acquainted with those organic laws upon which the creator of the body has made its health and vigor to depend, how worthless in the comparison does a knowledge of algebra, of history, or of all the Grecian and Latin lore which has come down to us from author or commentator. I see no way in which this knowledge of the laws of life and health can ever be universally or extensively diffused over the land, except it be through the medium of our common schools."

Children should be taught to think; to think for themselves, even if they follow the injunction given by Lessing to those who would be men, "Think wrong if you please, but think for yourself." As teachers and as parents, we ought ever to instill into the minds of the children the

old maxim: "Heaven helps those who help themselves," for it is a well tried saying, embodying in a small compass a vast human experience.

The worth of a state depends upon the character of its men; for the nation is only the aggregate of individual conditions, and civilization itself is but a question of personal improvement. The government of a nation is but a mirror, that reflects the general character of the people, which, collectively, make up that nation. The noble people will be nobly governed, the ignoble and corrupt, ignobly. In view of these facts, let us, instead of idly sitting down and howling over the corruptions creeping into our general government, rise manfully and resolutely to the work of training up the youth of this generation to the highest standard of moral and intellectual excellence.

Summing up the work of the year in figures, we find the whole amount of school money to be \$1031.26. Of this amount, district No. 1, had \$193.73—weeks schooling 23 2-5. No. 2 had \$119.71—weeks schooling 14 1-2. No. 3 had \$82.94—weeks schooling 12 5-7. No. 4 had \$59.74—weeks schooling 19. No. 5 had \$22.07—weeks schooling 19 4-5. No. 6 had \$199.25—weeks schooling 26 2-5. No. 7 had \$153.82—weeks schooling 19. Whole number of scholars attending during summer 122. Winter 179.

T. J. DAVIS,

Superintending School Committee.

LEE, March, 1873.

